

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as set forth below without prejudice to applicant pursuing one or more of the claims as originally filed in a continuation application.

Claims 1-9. (Previously Cancelled)

10. (Previously amended) A medical device comprising:

a flexible member;

an end effector operatively associated with a distal end of the flexible member; and

a handle operatively associated with the proximal end of the flexible member;

wherein the handle comprises an actuator for operating the end effector through the flexible member, wherein the proximal end of the flexible member is fixed relative to the handle, and wherein the flexible member extends from a single end of the handle; and

wherein an outer surface of the handle is sized and shaped to be gripped by a single hand and wherein the actuator is disposed on the handle to be operated by the same hand holding the handle without the use of the thumb or index finger of the same hand, while the thumb and index finger of the same hand are free to grip and advance the flexible member.

11. (Previously presented) The device of claim 10 wherein the end effector is selected from the group consisting of a biopsy forceps, grasping forceps, surgical scissors, extractors, washing pipes, needle injectors, non energized snares, and electosurgical snares.

12. (Previously presented) The device of Claim 10 wherein the flexible member has a length of at least 0.5 meter.

13. (Previously presented) The device of Claim 10 wherein the flexible member has a flexible shaft having a length of at least 1.0 meter.

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14. (currently amended) The device of claim 10 wherein the handle has a proximal end, a distal end, and an outer surface, the handle outer surface having a maximum width dimension disposed intermediate the proximal and distal ends of the handle, and the outer surface being tapered intermediate the maximum width dimension and each of the proximal and distal ends such that the outer surface has a relatively smaller width dimension at each of the proximal and distal ends.

15. (previously amended) The device of Claim 10 wherein the actuator comprises a lever adapted to be squeezed between fingers of the same hand and a housing portion of the handle, and wherein the lever is pivotably supported adjacent an end of the handle associated with the flexible member.

16. (currently amended) A system for operating a flexible endoscopic device with one hand comprising:

an end effector having a first configuration and a second configuration;

a handle;

a flexible shaft extending intermediate the end effector and the handle;

the handle comprising:

a housing adapted to be grasped by a single hand;

an actuator associated with the housing and operable by the hand holding the housing to actuate the end effector from the first configuration to the second configuration; wherein at least the thumb and index finger of the same hand holding the housing are free to grip and release the flexible shaft of the device; and

a release operable for returning the end effector to the first configuration.

~~a set of instructions for using the handle with a single hand.~~

17-20 (canceled).

21. (Cancelled)

22. (currently amended) A medical device comprising:

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a handle adapted to be gripped by a single hand;
an elongate, flexible member extending from the handle, the flexible member having a proximal end and a distal end; and
an end effector operatively associated with a distal end of the flexible member;

wherein the handle comprises an actuator for operating the end effector through the flexible member, and wherein the actuator is adapted to be operated by the same hand holding the handle and without use of the thumb or index finger of the same hand; and

wherein the handle comprises a release operatively associated with the end effector, wherein the release is operable by the thumb or index finger of the same hand holding the handle.

23. (previously presented) The medical device of Claim 22 wherein the release is disposed at a first end of the handle and wherein the elongate flexible member extends from a second, opposite end of the handle.

24. (previously presented) The medical device of Claim 23 wherein the actuator is disposed intermediate the release and the second end of the handle.

25. (previously presented) The medical device of Claim 22 wherein the actuator is operable for closing the end effector and wherein the release is operable for opening the end effector.

26. (previously presented) The medical device of Claim 22, wherein the medical device further comprises a ratchet mechanism, and wherein the release is adapted to disengage the ratchet mechanism.